HIS HIGHNESS

Prince Rupert's LETTER

TO THE

EARL OF *ARLINGTON*

His Majesties

Principal Secretary of State.

From on Board the *ROYAL CHARLES*
off the *Osterbank*, the XXIXth of *May*, 1673.

Distant from *East Capel* Seven Leagues, at One of the Clock Afternoon, the Wind S. S. W.

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His Highneſs Prince Rupert's *Letter to the Earl of* Arlington, *His Majeſties Principal Secretary of State, from on Board the* Royal Charles, *off of the* Oſter-bank, *the 29 of* May, *1673. diſtant from* East Capel *Seven Leagues, at One Afternoon, the Wind* S. S. W.

I Give you hereinan account of our Action yeſterday, being the 28. ſuch as at preſent can be made, having not had time to learn the Particulars of the Enemies loſſes. The foul weather before having given us opportunity and leiſure to ſound all the Sands; on the 27. it was reſolved at a Council of War, held here on board with the Flag Officers, to attack the Enemy Riding at Anchor in a Line between the *Rand* and the *Stony-bank*. Accordingly a Squadron was then ordered out of the ſeveral Diviſions of the Fleet (whereof the Eldeſt Captain was to command each Party) conſiſting in all of 35 Frigats, and 13 Fireſhips, beſides ſmall Craft to ſound before them. Yeſterday morning about 8 of the Clock, they drew out of their Squadrons, and ſailed towards the Enemy, the Wind at *S. S. W.* and by 12 a Clock at Noon Engaged the Van of them, Commanded by *Trump*: We were forced to Engage ſooner then I intended, to prevent the Enemies getting the Wind. That Squadron ſo commanded by *Trump* was

ſo preſt by us, that it gave way, and retired as far as the Sands would give them leave. The Squadron commanded by *De Ruyter* fell to the ſhare of Count *D' Eſtrees*, and the *French*, who behaved themſelves very bravely. Sir *Edward Spragge* alſo on his ſide maintained the Fight with ſo much courage and reſolution, that their whole Body gave way to ſuch degree, that had it not been for fear of the Shoals, we had driven them into their Harbours, and the King would have had a better account of them. The caſe being thus, and the night approaching, I judged it fit to ſtand a little off, and to Anchor here where I now lye.

The Enemy have had a conſiderable Loſs, which they will not eaſily repair; having many Men Slain, many Ships Diſabled, and ſome Deſtroyed. *De Ruyter* and *Trump* had run a great Hazard of being Burnt by ſome of our Fireſhips, if they had Behaved themſelves as they ought to have done. Our Loſſes are very inconſiderable, but two of our Ships onely being Diſabled, *viz.* the *Cambridge* and the *Reſolution*, which I ſhall ſend home to Refit; the reſt of our Work will be eaſily done here. We have loſt very few Common Men; as yet I have an account but of theſe Officers Slain, Captain *Fowles*, Captain *Weerden*, and Captain *Finch*; Colonel *Hamilton* has his Leg ſhot off. All the Officers and Common Men, generally behaved themſelves very well, of which I ſhall ſend the Particulars, when I am better informed; In my Squadron more eſpecially Captain *Lee*, Sir *John Holmes*, Captain *Wettwang*, Captain *Story*, Sir *Roger Strickland*, and Sir *William Reeves*, the firſt took a Ship of the Enemies, and the latter brought up a Fireſhip, and layd himſelf to Leeward of *Trump*, and if the Captain of the Fireſhip had done his Duty, *Trump* had been certainly Burnt; Notwithſtanding which, *Story* and *Wettwang* ſo Belaboured him, that *Reeves* cleared himſelf from the Crowd of the Enemy. I hope His Majeſty will be Satisfied, that conſidering the Place we Engaged in, and the Sands, there was as much done as could be expected. And thus I leave it to His Majeſties Favourable Conſtruction, to whom I wiſh many happy Years to come, this being His Birth-day.

FINIS.

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